286 leaves, oak and alder bark, and the method was
386 guarded as a family secret. Their production was very laborious. The plants were broken up and cooked with the thread; the ashes of the plants were used as a stain. Always only the thread was dyed, never the finished fabric. Thus one obtained serene colors of unlimited durability. Aprons a hundred years old exhibit a quiet brilliance which is still enchanting today. Although the natural colors have gradually been supplanted by modern aniline colors, knowledge of the old coloring technique is still preserved in many peasant families.

286 The use of colors change. Brown, blue, and
•301 red were probably the oldest colors. To them was
531 added green. The pattern originated on a white background. We can best recognize the Lithuanian interpretation of color in the juostos, those colorful decorative ribbons which /137/ serve as ribbons for belts and aprons, as fastenings of fur coats, and as decorations for the girls. They are distributed across the whole country, but show provincial differences both in the colors and in the patterns and techniques. Their coloration is analyzed in a fine manner by Karl Brammer: (44)

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44. Karl Brammer, "Litauische Webereien," Litauenbuch, loc. cit., p. 52.

"The nature of complementary colors is grasped here with astonishing sureness; an error never occurs. Red and greenish blue, orange and cyanic blue, greenish yellow and violet are placed next to each other in striking fashion. Furthermore the skillful use of white with opposite colors has a very fine effect. From the use of red and yellow on a black background (*) it can be clearly be seen

* The latter occurs only very rarely. V.J.

that the relationship between dark and brilliant

301 286 531 colors is also very well known. Joy in an abundance of colors indeed exists among the Lithuanians, but not loud joy in loud, bright colors as among the Poles; rather, the nature of color is here much more deeply and clearly comprehended." In addition it may be noted that coloration in the Lithuanian weaving has undergone a development in the course of time--above all in the technique, which on the one hand considerably increased the number of available colors and on the other enhanced their brilliance. We can recognize this when we compare, for example, the thoroughly simple coloration of the oldest ribbons and aprons known to us with that of a later period. This means, however, no lessening of the value of the later colorful weaving patterns; and above all Brammer is right when he lays the principal weight on the sensitivity of the color composition. But just this sensitivity could only later unfold itself to full expression.

An actually inspired hymn to the colorful juostos is sung by another German artist, who was also brought to Lithuania by the World War: Hans Heinrich Schaeder. He writes: "The color is here still freer, since it is liberated from consideration of the body, the three-dimensional space, /138/ and lives only for the surface. The surface is infinitely delicate like the soft material of the ribbons; the color slings to it. One does not grasp the fact that here colorful threads are woven together; did not these patterns grow like flowers under a rising and setting sun? All the secreta and longings of the Lithuanian soul are hidden in these ribbons. These wonderful, serene colors, were they not subdued by the tears of the woman who did the weaving? This melody of lines and colored surfaces, is it not intimately related to the infinite sweetness of the Lithuanian songs?"(45)

45. Heinrich Schaeder, op. cit., p. 64.

In earlier times the juostos were never put

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on the market. Women and girls gave them to those whom they loved. On an old juosta the beginning of a little yearning love song is woven in. A woven dedication mentioned by Kurschat (1911) reads:

I wove as I was able to, I gave it to
whom I wanted.
But I always believed that my beloved
should receive it.

Thus these ribbons often speak of a rare tenderness of feeling, and their colorful patterns seem illuminated by longing and love, by fate and sorrow. In many ribbons there were also, as Otto Glagau (1869) informs us, mottoes in English and French whose meaning the peasant girls naturally didn't know, but which remained preserved in certain families and were always imitated anew. Here, to be sure, we have forms of a later development, just as the occasional use of metal threads goes back to the influence of the Lyon silk industry in the eighteenth century. Otherwise one used in an earlier period only threads of flax, wool, and hemp; the use of silk, on the other hand, has arisen only in most recent times. Frequently these silk juostos are sold today as binders or crocheted together as table runners, but in the villages these uses are unknown.

The production of the juostos proceeds in three different ways. We know pintinės, austinės, and kaišytinės--/139/ i.e. a braiding, a weaving, and a darning technique. The oldest of them is the braiding technique, which is still practised in the north of the province of Aukschtaiten in the districts of Zarasai, Panevėžys, and Ukmergė, though it has become quite rare. (46) The threads

46. A. Rukštelė, loc. cit., pp. 22-23 and 46.

are laid over a board and then braided, beginning

1[juostos, i.e. colorful ribbons -- Analyst]

286 531 301 from the middle. Thus result two parts in which the same pattern begins at the middle and runs toward the outer edges. The ribbons thus produced, which can be well stretched, are especially wide. They usually contain a simple pattern of different stripes which cross each other. Their production no more demands equipment than that of the woven ribbons (juostos austinės), which today are the most familiar types and are distributed over all of Lithuania. The weaver ties the colorful wool threads from which the juosta will be made to a hook on the wall with one end, with the other to her belt, after she has wound the threads around a little stick and laid them parallel in such a way that half of the threads are on top and half on the bottom. Thus the warp is formed. With a shuttle in her hand the weaver pulls the cross threads--the so-called woof--through the lengthwise threads according to the pattern, and pushes each cross thread against the other with a kind of wooden folder [Falzbein]. The most difficult part is the stretching out of the pattern.(46)

46. A. Rukštelė, op. cit., pp. 22-23 and 46.

In contrast to these woven ribbons, the third, the darning technique (juostos kaišytinės), has today become about as rare as the braiding technique. Its home is the Suvalkijan area. In the darning technique the colored threads that produce the pattern are pulled through by hand. During the weaving itself, the colorful pattern is embroidered in and pulled fast with the next turn. This technique, for which the weaver needs a little hand loom, "represents considerable progress in the Lithuanian ribbon technique, brought about by the increased use of stylized flowers as weaving patterns, /140/ whose imitation would encounter insurmountable difficulties in the juostos austinės (woven ribbons)." (47)

Mariampolé and of Kalvarija. At Klaipéda their decoration consists of several finely embroidered horizontal strips. They are not only ornaments, but also symbols of virtue. In some villages it is considered improper to be seen without an apron. Once, at a market, a woman was asked to sell her apron and she considered herself outraged.

The other parts of the dress of a peasant woman are: a linen shirt with wide plaited sleeves, trimmed with small embroidered designs, a very ample woollen skirt, sometimes dark and plain and sometimes striped or of a Scottish pattern, gathered at the waist and a sleeveless vest, the *"kiklikas"*, a kind of corslet often made of valuable brocade, which made its first appearance in the early 19th century. According to Mr. Galauné, the first specimens were perhaps imported by the soldiers of Napoleon's "Grande Armée", on their retreat from Russia. In the neighbourhood of Klaipéda, the *kiklikai* are of dark velvet. Necklets of coral and especially of amber are worn on the neck. Their beads, either raw or cut in facets with a knife, have not only the value of gems, but are endowed with magic qualities, they belong to times gone by and to legend. These fossil drops of resin, which have been described by Tacitus and were sold by Ligurian traders who imported them into the countries of the Mediterranean and Black Sea area, where they were deemed to be more precious than gold and who therefore jealously kept the secret of their origin, often contained imprisoned insects and other mementoes of olden times.

Young girls wear on their heads a band of tissue held at the back by a flow of colored ribbons, married women wear instead *"nuometas"*, a sort of white veil several meters long, which is of Eastern origin, but was also adopted in the West, and Tertullian recommended its use. At first this fashion found but few followers and was later abandoned, but it became the rule for married women from 1300 until 1500. During that time a large number of themes of sculptural models were imported into Lithuania, the survivals of which have been described above. It is possible that this fashion followed the same route. And do not certain weavers, with their dour yet finely cut profiles encircled in white, resemble some statues of the Middle Ages? The veil with its folds and its ritual knots is sacred, it bestows upon such as have taken it a certain measure of authority and of office. With their head-dress resembling that of the Saints of the Church, these peasant women would seem to belong to a religious order.